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Highland Pharmacy robbed at gunpoint

SUE TIFFIN
Staff Reporter

Haliburton Highlands OPP are investigating an armed robbery that occurred at Highland Pharmacy on Dec. 9.

At approximately 6 p.m. that evening, officers responded to the robbery at the business, which is located on Highland Street in Haliburton.

"Information was received that two unknown masked suspects entered the business armed with a firearm," said the OPP in a press release. "The suspects demanded and received narcotics, then fled the scene. The employees were not injured."

The OPP Tactics and Rescue Unit (TRU), Canine, Emergency Response Unit (ERT) and Forensic Identification Services (FIS) were called to assist. Just before 7 p.m., an official OPP Twitter account, OPPCommunicationsCR, which shares information regarding events in OPP areas of Central Region, tweeted "ADVISORY: #OPP conducting an ongoing investigation in the area of #Haliburton to #ToryHill Large police presence in area. Requesting residents to stay inside and avoid the area if possible." A second tweet at 7:15 p.m. advised: "CLEARED: #Haliburton to #ToryHill – Police presence clearing."

The incident is still under investigation and further information will be released when available, according to the Haliburton Highlands OPP press release.

Anyone with information regarding the incident or the suspects' identity is asked to contact the Haliburton Highlands detachment at 705-286-1431, toll-free at 1-888-310-1122, or anonymous via Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

Putting in the hard yards

Minden resident Blake Paton charges up an incline while Nordic skiing on ungroomed trails on Wednesday, Dec. 2 at the Pinestone Resort in Haliburton. Later in the season, the resort offers groomed trails for Nordic skiing and also caters to snowshoers. See the website (www.pinestone-resort.com/attraction/) for more information such as rates and what passes are available. /DARREN LUM Staff

COVID–19 deals blow to Haliburton Forest's Poker Run

DARREN LUM
Staff Reporter

COVID-19 has delivered a fatal blow to what would have been the 30th annual Poker Run, traditionally hosted by the Haliburton Forest and Wildlife Reserve every February.

With rising cases of the coronavirus across Ontario, it has prompted townships and event organizers to consider cancelling or rescheduling any public gatherings

Tegan Legge, the general manager of the Haliburton Forest confirmed the latest cancellation of another public event related to the sweeping influence of COVID-19 when she announced the cancellation of the annual snowmobile touring event fundraiser for the Haliburton Firefighters Association scheduled for

see SNOWMOBILERS page 2

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Province announces $350K in new tourism funding

SUE TIFFIN

Staff Reporter

Much-anticipated provincial funding to support the tourism region that includes the Haliburton Highlands was announced last Monday, Dec. 7, with $350,000 awarded to Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization to help offer relief to organizations hard-hit by COVID-19.

Lisa MacLeod, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries made the announcement virtually via online teleconferencing tool Zoom, with Laurie Scott, MPP for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock; John Yakabuski, MPP for Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke; Daryl Kramp, MPP for Hastings, Lennox and Addington and Nicole Whiting, executive director of Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization (RTO 11).

"I know that our sectors were hit first, hardest, and will take the longest to recover as a result of COVID-19," said MacLeod, before announcing $350,000 to support the regional tourism organization, she said, "so they can engage and support hyper-local tourism activities within the region, in order to position us for a comeback for a year of Staycation 2021."

Previously, MacLeod said the government had invested about $2.9 million this year in initiatives including community museum operating grants, which included funding for the Haliburton Highlands Museum, public libraries across the region, including the Haliburton County Public Library, and heritage organizations and iconic events.

"All told, this $3.25 million, in this critical part of our province, is required to do two things," said MacLeod. "One, is to aid and guide the economic recovery of the heritage, sport, tourism, culture industries, as we move forward to 2021 and beyond. And the second thing, and this is probably the most important thing, it's about community. It's about where we live. It's about pride of place and pride of people. The investments we've made through this ministry hit to the very core of what it means to be an Ontarian and why we love to live where we do."

She said she was proud to "deliver this news right before Christmas, so that we can provide stability and continuity in our sectors despite how challenging these times [have been.]"

Region 11 includes an entirely rural area from the Haliburton Highlands to the Ottawa Valley Tourism Region, encompassing six counties and 45 municipalities.

"Haliburton and the surrounding area is one of the most photographed regions in our province and is a beautiful jewel in the natural beauty within Ontario," said Scott in a press release. "The provincial funding announced today will help support the families and businesses who work in the local tourism sector, which has been hampered this year by the impact of COVID-19."

Nicole Whiting, executive director of OHTO, (RTO 11), was thrilled with the announcement, thanking MacLeod for her "unwavering support of our industry."

"As it turns out, our region has exactly what people were looking for, so many of the businesses that were not sure how they would fare ended up [doing well], some even having their best summers ever," she said. "That isn't to say there isn't still a lot of struggle still out there, for sure, but we are really excited about how our industry has come together and responded to being there for the consumer in terms of the product we have to offer."

"Our communities are surrounded by world-class natural assets, but it's the character of our people that brings our natural environment and our rich cultural heritage to life," she said. "The investments made in our region will help preserve an incredible legacy of collaboration, creativity and resilience ... The provincial support behind our sector is what allows us to feel hopeful for the future, for sure."

The funding announcement was expected this past July, when MacLeod and Scott visited the Highlands together as part of the "Reopening Ontario Tour."

"All funding to assist with our tourism initiatives is welcome, even when it comes through a bit later than expected," said Haliburton County Warden Liz Danielsen. "This funding goes a long way towards assisting the region, and Haliburton, in proceeding with several programs underway both during the pandemic and as we move forward. We are hopeful to hear a further funding announcement in the very near future and appreciate the province's commitment to tourism as an industry that we rely upon so heavily."

Lisa MacLeod, below, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, joined MPP Laurie Scott, seen above,MPP John Yakabuski and MPP Daryl Kramp to announce $350,000 in local tourism support in an area that includes Haliburton County and the Ottawa valley. /Screenshot

Snowmobilers still welcome despite Poker Run cancellation

from page 1

Saturday, Feb. 6.

"We have made this tough decision for the safety of our staff, guests and community. This event over the years has brought in over 350 riders (some years over 400) annually from all over Ontario to stay and play within our community. Last year, between the efforts of our staff and our incredible volunteers, we raised $15,000 for our local fire department," she wrote in a prepared statement. "We have all intentions of continuing this annual tradition in 2022, on Saturday, February 12."

Although the event isn't on, all day pass fees for Saturday, Feb. 6 will be donated to the Dysart Fire Department. Legge said the forest trails will be available and the facility will be open for day passes and to those "already staying with us." Food will be served this winter with an outdoor barbecue on weekends.

Mike Iles, Dysart et al Fire Department chief said Haliburton Forest has always been supportive of the department with its donations to the Haliburton Fire Association over the years, whether it was from financial contributions, offering their staff or equipment to emergency scenes or even bringing food and coffee to firefighters.

Iles said their day-to-day operations will not be affected by the event's cancellation, but that the donated money was often used to purchase extra equipment or equipment that could enhance the service the fire department provides. The list of items purchased include battery operated extrication tools, snowmobile rescue equipment, portable battery powered lighting, and a boat and motor.

"Our first snowmobile and rescue toboggan was purchased using donations made by the Haliburton Forest and Wildlife, since then we have purchased a second rescue toboggan (from donated funds), which gives us the flexibility of responding to back country emergencies by ATV in the summer and snowmobile in the winter," he wrote.

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New Cases Reported Today

0	4	15
Haliburton	KawarthaLakes	Northumberland

Total Confirmed Cases to Date

27	218	166 *	411 *
Haliburton (HAL)	Kawartha Lakes (CKL)	Northumberland (NTH)	HKPRDHU

***One additional case has been transferred from another health unit.**

COVID-19 Contacts, Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths by County

County	Cases Not Resolved	Cases Resolved	Current High-Risk Contacts	Current Probable Cases	Hospitalizations (Total to date)	Deaths among Confirmed Cases	Deaths among Probable Cases
Haliburton	1	26	1	0	1	0	0
Kawartha Lakes	11	188	35	0	11	19	13
Northumberland	47	118	138	0	6	1	0

COVID-19 Contacts, Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths, HKPRDHU

All Counties	Cases Not Resolved	Cases Resolved	Current High-Risk Contacts	Current Probable Cases	Hospitalizations (Total to date)	Deaths among Confirmed Cases	Deaths among Probable Cases
HKPRDHU	59	332	174	0	18	20	13

While there were no new COVID-19 cases reported in Haliburton County as of Monday, Dec. 14, there's been a huge influx of cases in other parts of the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit. There were four new cases reported in the City of Kawartha Lakes, while Northumberland County recorded 15 new cases.

Privacy a concern for local health unit when reporting COVID–19 cases

SUE TIFFIN
Staff Reporter

With each update of confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the area from the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District health unit, comments from the public regarding their questions and concerns – namely, why isn't more information given about an individual's location or their whereabouts leading up to their positive test – follow.

Throughout the year, the *Echo,* has published articles about these concerns, with responses from the health unit explaining their decisions and process – including what contact tracing looks like. Here, the local Medical Officer of Health for the HKPRD health unit weighs in on those topics as Ontario experiences the second wave of the pandemic.

Further information regarding confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Haliburton County, as well as information about best practices including COVID-19 prevention measures during the pandemic can be found at http://www.hkpr.on.ca.

Information reported protects individual's privacy

Dr. Lynn Noseworthy, local Medical Officer of Health for the HKPRD health unit, said the health unit has received both positive and negative feedback about the way they currently report local COVID-19 data in our region. To date, if someone in Haliburton County, City of Kawartha Lakes, or Northumberland County tests positive for COVID-19, they are listed as a number within their county, rather than a more specific location highlighting the area or municipality in which they live. Numbers are then broken down by gender, age and outbreak setting.

"Our decision to only list local COVID-19 cases by county, not the specific town or township in which a person lives, is largely due to the relatively small populations of these places," said Noseworthy. "It could be very easy to identify someone who tests positive for COVID-19. We feel our current approach to reporting local COVID-19 cases strikes a balance between privacy and people's right to know."

Noseworthy said COVID-19 prevention measures are what will keep people safe.

"The fact is that COVID-19 is circulating everywhere in our community, so a person could potentially be exposed to the virus anyplace and in any space," she said. "Therefore, continuing with COVID-19 prevention measures is critical to reduce the risk of the virus. No matter where we are in Haliburton County or elsewhere, we need to: stay home if ill, wear a mask when inside public places, practise physical distancing by remaining two metres (six feet) apart from others, wash hands thoroughly and frequently with soap and water and avoid non-essential travel, especially to high-risk areas."

"This," said Noseworthy, "is the most important information to use to protect yourself and others."

Health unit aims to protect personal health information while informing community of potential health risks

Noseworthy said the public health unit is aware that "areas with larger populations or more cases in those highly populated areas may include a break down of cases by municipality in their reporting."

"Each Ontario health unit, and its respective Medical Officer of Health (MOH), follow provincial protocols and directives around the pandemic response," she said. "But the nature of Ontario's public health system also allows for local health units and MOHs to use their own discretion and judgment on public health matters – COVID-19 included – in their own community. We are seeing that in the way COVID-19 restrictions are being tailored to individual areas, not mandated across Ontario. This is a strength of our public health system, in my opinion, to meet the individual and unique needs of the area being served. An approach used in a larger urban centre like Toronto, Ottawa or Hamilton may not be as good a fit in a more rural and remote area like our health unit region, and vice versa."

"As a medical doctor, it weighs heavily on me how public health agencies like ours can balance privacy with the public's right to know during COVID-19," she said. "Privacy does enter the equation, as the health unit has the legal obligation to protect the personal health information of our patients and clients. We also are tasked with informing area residents about potential health risks in their community. We walk a fine line in doing both as we serve the public during the pandemic, and that is why we are taking the approach we are to reporting local COVID-19 data."

> ***"Privacy does enter the equation, as the health unit has the legal obligation to protect the personal health information of our patients and clients. We also are tasked with informing area residents and potential health risks in their community. We walk a fine line in doing both...***
>
> — Dr. Lynn Noseworthy, Medical Officer of Health for HKPRD health unit

Contact tracing 'methodical, comprehensive and thorough'

While Noseworthy said the health unit is trying to balance privacy rights and the public's right to know, she said, "[w]e also want to assure local residents that the health unit takes their concerns seriously about protecting against the spread of COVID-19."

The health unit will contact anyone who tests positive for COVID-19 in Haliburton County, Northumberland County and the City of Kawartha Lakes, directing that person to self-isolate, not go out, monitor symptoms and take further precautions to limit the spread of the virus. Details are obtained about every place that individual visited or person they were in contact with during their infectious period, with every one of those identified individuals contacted and told to self-isolate and watch for symptoms, with arrangements made for testing if symptoms become apparent.

"This case and contact management is very methodical, comprehensive and thorough… and a critical part to controlling the spread of COVID-19 in our communities," said Noseworthy.

"It's been our health unit's experience that people who test positive for COVID-19 are very open and honest about their interactions with others and do their best to provide the needed information to track down potential contacts."

Reporting workplace outbreaks

While workplace outbreaks are reported by the media if the information can be verified, or by workplaces themselves, the health unit does not immediately report this information if it determines there is no risk to the public.

"The health unit will not routinely share the location of workplace outbreaks, but is including the number of local workplace outbreaks in our daily COVID-19 case reporting," said Noseworthy. "Having said that, if there is a workplace outbreak in which there is a risk to the public, and we are unable to determine all the close contacts, we would notify the public. That is what happened in one previous incident when there was a workplace outbreak [in the region] with a potential risk to the public."

"In another previous situation [in the region], we also released the name of a large workplace with COVID-19 cases," said Noseworthy. "This was done in consultation with the workplace, which was issuing its own public statement. In these types of scenarios, the health unit may also share information about a workplace if the workplace requests public notification – even if there is no risk to the public."

Contact tracing is essential to prevent the spread of COVID-19, said Noseworthy, and said restaurants and eateries are required to keep contact information for customers who dine in. Under the province's COVID-19 framework, in the higher colour categories, including yellow, which the HKPRD health unit region is currently under, additional businesses like gyms and fitness centres must also keep contact information for customers and patrons.

"The idea is that this information could be provided to public health if there is a positive COVID-19 test and people need to be traced/contacted," said Noseworthy.

Noseworthy said the information about workplace outbreaks differs from the information the public is able to access in the case of restaurant, personal services and recreational water facilities health inspections, which are mandated to share their inspection reports and because "the reporting of health inspections at restaurants does not involve personal health information, but information about whether or not the restaurant complies with regulatory requirements."

Reporting of confirmed cases in schools and long-term care homes

"Just as we do for area workplaces and businesses, the health unit's focus is working and supporting efforts to prevent and limit the spread of COVID-19 in all public settings," said Noseworthy. "In the case of schools and long-term care homes, we work closely with our partners in these sectors to keep learning environments and care settings safe for everyone."

School outbreaks are reported online by the province at www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-cases-schools-and-child-care-centres and not by the health unit, which said to avoid duplication, they instead include that information in the cumulative total that is posted on their website.

"When it comes to schools, there are protocols in place with educators to inform school communities about potential COVID-19 cases," said Noseworthy. "Similar measures are also in place for the health unit to support long-term care homes in the management, control and response to COVID-19 outbreaks."

"When it comes to long-term care homes and hospitals experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks in our region, this information is included in our daily COVID-19 data reporting," said Noseworthy. Information on COVID-19 cases for residents and staff living or working in Ontario's long-term care homes can also be found here: https://covid-19.ontario.ca/data/long-term-care-homes.

Results return to health unit of primary residence

When a person tests positive for COVID-19 in Haliburton County, their test results return to the public health unit of their primary residence – that means someone testing positive in Haliburton County who primarily lives in Toronto will have their result returned there, while someone from Haliburton County testing positive in Toronto will have their result returned here.

"Currently, people can get tested for COVID-19 anywhere in Ontario – regardless of where they live in the province," said Noseworthy. "If a confirmed positive COVID-19 test result comes back, the findings are reported to health authorities in the region where the individual lives."

In this case, the appropriate health unit/health department will then do follow-up with the person who tested positive, said Noseworthy, and includes the same direction as anyone else who tests positive to self-isolate, not go out, and contact trace based on details of where the individual visited or people they might have been in contact with.

"The bottom line is that regardless of where someone lives or is tested for COVID-19 in Ontario, the provincial case and contact management system will follow up with the person to ensure they self-isolate and reduce the spread of the virus to others," said Noseworthy.

See the Highlands through our reporters' eyes. Follow us on Instagram

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The Noble Barber wants new shop to become hub for the community

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

While he wasn't born or raised in the Haliburton area, Nick Folco still considers his most recent return to the region to be something of a homecoming.

Launching the downtown area's newest business, The Noble Barber, last Tuesday, Dec. 8, Folco caught up with the *Echo* to discuss his motivations for moving to the Haliburton area and reflect on the "overwhelming" welcome he's received over the past week.

"I came to this area a lot while I was growing up. A lot of my friends and family have cottages in the area, so Haliburton is a place that is very familiar to me," Folco said. "Even as I got older, I still found ways and reasons to visit the area. I guess I've always just felt drawn to be here, like I was meant to be here."

He added, "Then, my wife, she split her time growing up in Milton and Minden, so she knows the area really well. We'd come up on weekends and just loved the atmosphere. We've been saying for a long time that, if we could ever make work happen up here, we would do it."

The couple's journey towards making their dream become a reality began in earnest around six years ago. Folco considers himself to be something of a late bloomer. He got into the hairstyling business when he was 29. Working at a West 49 store at the time, Nick was looking for something he could really sink his teeth into.

When his wife, Kirstley, almost on a whim suggested he visit a barber shop in Burlington to see if he'd be interested in cutting hair for a living, even Nick couldn't have imagined what it would lead to.

Downtown Haliburton's newest business, The Noble Barber, opened its doors to the public last Tuesday, Dec. 8. The one-man operation is led by Nick Folco, who is hoping to build his brand, and his business, right here in the Highlands region. /MIKE BAKER Staff

"I went in and watched my mentor, John Courtney. He had this guy come in with this crazy long hair, and the guy's like 'I want to take it all off'. Seeing that transformation, where a guy went from a mop, essentially, to this nice side-part, with a cool fade on the side – I thought that was really cool to watch. Then I thought to myself, if I could do this it would be a lot of fun," Folco recalled.

Following that meeting, Nick officially became an apprentice at The Village Cigar and Barbershop. He would hone his craft there for around three years before moving on to another opportunity in Peterborough. There he built up his clientele, and essentially operated as his own business under another barber's roof. Gaining experience with each cut, Folco always considered that job to be a stepping stone towards something better.

The Noble Barber is open five days a week, Tuesday through to Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. While Folco says he specializes in shorter hair styles, he is also prepared to offer salon-style services to those interested. A traditional haircut, which Nick says can be anything from a buzz cut to back and side fade, costs $25. He also offers beard trims and hot towel shaves.

"Hot towel shaves were really popular in Peterborough. We had people coming from all over the place to get one. The way I do it – I cover the face with six hot towels. There's an oil and a lather in between each towel to help the skin soften up, open up the pores and bring the dirt to the forefront of the skin and then shave the hair off," Folco said. "You get that nice baby bum smooth feeling once it's done."

While he will spend the next few months establishing a new clientele here in Haliburton, Folco has some significant room at his shop for future growth. With a second barber station already set up and ready to go, Nick says he's open to bringing somebody in to work alongside him in the future. Beyond that, he wants to open up a line of communication with Haliburton Highlands Secondary School to show local youth there are different ways to earn a living.

"I really want to have a space, one day, for people that might not know what they want to do with their life. I stumbled into this when I was 29 years old, so definitely later in life. I'd really like to go into the local high school and just tell kids that you don't have to go into the traditional workforce, you don't have to become a doctor, or feel forced to go into something you don't want to do. There are so many more things out there you can do that can make you a living, and you can enjoy your life rather than being stuck into thinking you have to conform to certain ideas," Folco said. "I'm hoping to set up a third station at the shop eventually that will be just for teaching. And then we can have people that are maybe interested in this to come in and see if it's for them."

More than anything, though, Nick wants to turn his new shop into a central hub for the community – one where anyone, no matter the age, can feel comfortable visiting.

"I want this place to become a real old school, traditional barbershop. Growing up, I remember going to get my hair cut and there being guys inside playing chess or checkers, and just hanging out. I think it would be really cool to have something like that," Folco said. "I'm going to have a coffee machine here, so I'm encouraging people to come in, read the paper, watch some sports on the TV… I'd love for this to become a spot where regulars come in and just hang out."

Visit www.thenoblebarber.ca or call 705-457-1840 to book an appointment.

Thousands more added to Shindig totals for Fuel for Warmth

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

Days after the stage lights went out and the performers went home following the Highlands Virtual Shindig 2020, thousands of dollars has since been added to the $41,500 initially raised from the annual fundraiser, bringing the total to $57,000 for Fuel for Warmth.

More is likely to be added, as donations will continue to be accepted through Fuel for Warmth (www.fuelforwarmth.com/shindig), an organization that assists residents in need with securing resources for heating their homes.

Mike Jaycock, aka Dame Beatrice, wrote in an email that he was overwhelmed by the responses, not only to the virtual performance, "but to the sense of need that people have taken to their hearts. I think the growing total is a recognition by people that there is, and will be, a real need to help people this winter."

He continues, "The pandemic has created tremendous hardships for many people and, I think, we are all well aware that there will be a greater need this winter. The kindness and support that people, businesses and local organizations have demonstrated for this virtual event, and for many other causes in the Highlands, is proof of the goodness that exists in our communities. Donations have come from both here in the Highlands and from around the province ... some from far beyond our borders. It's impossible not to feel humbled at this response."

Jaycock, who has spent a lifetime working in broadcast media, said he's never been part of such an effort before and will never forget this experience.

"The Shindig production team took on something the likes of which have not been attempted in this region. People in the broadcast industry have told me that they were very impressed at our accomplishment and we are delighted that it has had such a large impact. The wonderful talent and our special guests (Rick Mercer, Red Green, Ron James, MP Jamie Schmale) enabled us to put on a very entertaining show and do good at the same time," he wrote.

A high definition, edited version of the 7th annual Shindig show is available to view on YouTube (www.youtube.com/watch?v=5cVGULsVyoE) or at the Fuel for Warmth (www.fuelforwarmth.com/shindig) website thanks to Tammy Rae.

"The months of planning and development by the team were well rewarded on hearing of both the result and that people really enjoyed the show. In my life, this will go down as one of the most unique undertakings I ever been a part of. I have a good feeling in my heart," Jaycock wrote.

One child's gesture, sows seed of generosity

DARREN LUM
Staff Reporter

An eight-year-old's selfless gesture is teaching a lesson in how a little can go a long way.

When Oliver Williams of Haliburton found $5 outside the A.J. LaRue Arena on Saturday, Dec. 5 it didn't occur to him to think of himself.

At first, "Olly" wanted to use the money to buy a gift for his grandma in Haliburton, but when he saw the sirens from the OPP cruisers on hand for a community collection for the food bank outside Foodland, he thought he should do the same.

Mother Chyna Schell offered to resolve her son's dilemma by matching her son's found money so he could donate to the food bank and get something for his grandma. They ended up going together and purchasing items for the food bank.

Later that day, Schell posted what her son did to social media just like she usually does to update her husband's side of the family living in the United Kingdom.

"I just posted because I thought it was so sweet of Olly to have this genuine moment of understanding that even $5 can make a difference and I didn't really think much of it," she said.

Her post created a ripple of generosity that has grown into a tsunami of support for food banks here and everywhere donors happen to live. She's been amazed by the level of generosity and the lesson it has taught.

"I couldn't believe it. I got one message, then I got two messages," she said.

Her neighbours are friends with Brad Park and wife Danielle. Brad owns the Haliburton Foodland. Through that connection, Brad committed to matching whatever was raised by Dec. 12.

He said donating was about giving credence to the idea that every little bit is important "no matter how big or small that donation is, as every nickel and dime donated helps. If we can stretch this money as far as we can, it will benefit our community tremendously, especially this year with COVID challenges people face currently."

He adds Foodland grocery stores across Ontario are currently holding a food bank drive during the holiday season where customers are asked to donate any denomination to the local food bank. At the conclusion of the collection, a lump sum of gift cards can be used for food by people in need by people in need in the local community..

After this commitment, Schell said, "So that's when it really took off."

Originally, people were making local donations to whatever charitable organization they wanted, to match the $5 first donated by Olly. But when they saw the commitment by the local grocery store, that's when people, who had already donated in their own communities, whether it was in Tofino, B.C., or even in Waterloo, Ont., started sending donations directly to Olly's mom.

Eight-year-old Oliver Williams of Haliburton holds up the $5 bill he found and used for the local food bank, which became the start of a movement of giving, resulting in $8,400 being raised for the local food bank.. Oliver's mother Chyna Schell posted this image and described how her son had thought of using the money for a gift for grandma or for the food bank. His selfless action has spawned a movement of giving that has served as a reminder that every little bit helps. Submitted by Chyna Schell.

"People were messaging me and saying, 'Can I send you an e-transfer? We've already made our local donation, but we really want it to be matched as well and I have so many e-transfers I now have an Excel spreadsheet. This has just taken off and in three days, I think we're around $1,200," Chyna said, specifying this is the worldwide total early last week.

There are still more e-transfers to deposit, she adds.

Most recently, Highlands business CDH Carpentry has promised to also match the fund raised total.

Chyna, the mother of two young boys said her eldest son, Olly has also been blown away by the turn of events.

> ***"I've seen this town come together for everything. From family devastation with house fires to just anything.***
>
> — Chyna Schell

"Every night I update him and tell him where all these donations are coming from and we've talked a lot about how much of a difference just a little bit can make and how amazing it is that just teaching people that they don't have to give a lot. Literally, all our donations have just been $5 per family member," she said. The final tally was $8,400, as the collection finished with $2,800 and then had the matching donations by the Foodland and CDH carpentry.

Being a 2006 graduate of the local high school, Haliburton Highlands Secondary School, and running a dance school in Haliburton and raising two boys, Schell knows the community well.

"I've seen this town come together for everything. From family devastation with house fires to just anything. The amount that our town can come together and just support each other is incredible," she said. "Part of me wants to say I'm not surprised in the slightest that we have come together this much because I've seen it before."

Schell admits before this she didn't feel good about donating small amounts to charitable causes and believes her son taught her to put aside the ego to help in any way, no matter how small it may seem.

"Honestly, I'm loving the lesson because I'm guilty of it too. I'm completely guilty of thinking if I can't afford to donate a lot then – not that there's no point in donating a little. But there is this feeling of embarrassment I've given only this much. My favourite part of all of this is the lesson that when we all come together and give a little bit each it doesn't take much to grow it very quickly, so to just inspire people and make people feel comfortable and OK without only giving what they can and that's what people are really focusing on and it's been so amazing," she said.

points of view

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Forever in our memories: Creighton Feir

Sign of the season by Darren Lum

Ripple effect

Editorial

sue tiffin

WHEN DON SMITH'S family responded to a request about people who might want to talk about his life, and his contribution to Haliburton County, which he first visited in 1947, the list of names of people who were important to Don in some way was abundant and paints a vivid picture of someone who, as his obituary notes, was dedicated to the people and things he loved.

While one would expect the acknowledgement of lifelong friends, like Robert Bateman, those belonging to groups that connect with Don's lifelong passion as a naturalist, notably the Haliburton Field Naturalists and Kawartha Field Naturalists and the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust, and neighbours on Lake Kashagawigamog including Melanie Blodgett and the Cox family, others had touched his life on a daily, weekly, monthly or even less frequent basis in passing, too.

That list includes Cynndy Hinkson for booking Diner's Club at Win Yeung Restaurant for community seniors; Jim Frost, who looked after tickets for local theatre that Don enjoyed; Kathy Stouffer at Master's Book Store, who ordered the books on nature he requested; the 'pie lady' and Steph, who put aside corn for him at the farmer's market in case he was late arriving, and an employee at the Haliburton Feed and Seed where he bought birdseed for his feathered friends.

The list paints a picture of a vital connection that so clearly exists in small-town communities, where if we don't know each other by name, we know each other from where we work, or where we shop, or where we walk – where we wave as we pass each other regardless of whether we even recognize each other, because we happen to be in the same place at the same time.

This connection to the people and places around us is important every day, as it obviously was to Don, but we become especially attuned to it in times of the loss of a loved one, around this festive season of giving and nostalgia, and during a pandemic in which we are all trying to carry on despite collective anxiety, grief, and stress.

While this year has been hard in that we have had to adapt sometimes to be close, we know that even when we are distanced we can still make a great difference in someone's day and potentially their lives by generating the best of our qualities: empathy, generosity, patience, curiosity, and being aware of the world, and those in it, around us. Please take time in these days to be kind to one another, and to slow down every once in awhile to look outside and find joy in the birds.

Giving inspires hope

Green meadow

Tales from the great

lynda shadbolt

HELLO ALL you wonderful people paying attention to the good vibrations that are around you! There are so many positive things happening these days and if you want to tell me about them you can email me at haliburtonyoga@gmail.com. Stories can be 50 - 500 words, written or recorded. Together we all inspire each other, uplift each other and hold hope for ourselves and for the planet!

I've been thinking about the power of hope. As we light our advent candles each Sunday I contemplate hope, in a way that I never have, because of COVID. We all have to have hope for ourselves, our families, our community and the global planet. And we each need to do whatever acts, big or small, that contribute to having hope for all.

The story that gives me hope this week comes from the Schell family who live in Haliburton. Many of you will know Shelley from the Haliburton School of Art and Design: Fleming College, Luke from Perfect Prints and Chyna and Quinn who grew up in this community dancing their hearts out! Chyna is the owner of Haliburton Dance Arts. This story comes from Olly, who is the son of Chyna and Sam, grandson of Shelly and Luke. The story begins Saturday, Dec. 5 when Olly, who is 8 years old, found a $5 bill on the ground at our local arena. He decided he wanted to donate the $5 towards purchasing items for our local food bank. Shelley posted a photo of him with the $5 in hand on Facebook.

A friend's two children who saw what he did decided to match his donation. $15 were donated. And then the story started to spread on Facebook and Instagram. Donations started to come in from the United Kingdom, Honduras and from across Canada. By Dec. 11 $1,170 had been raised. And then two of our local businesses stepped in and upped the ante. Haliburton Foodland pledged that they would match all funds donated by Saturday Dec. 12 and Eleanor and Chris Dobbins of CDH Carpentry made the same offer. There is so much hope in this beautiful story. One person, (an 8 year old no less) doing one small act of generosity that is making a big difference gives all of us hope. Local business that give and give again and again to support the community give so much hope. This story demonstrates how social media has the power to connect us to help each other locally and globally. One thing COVID has taught us is that we are all connected, and the health of every being is essential. We must work together, support each other and hold hope. This story is not over. If you want to donate you can e-transfer funds to chyna.schell@gmail.com and she will add your contribution. As I write this article more than $1,500 has been donated, and will have been matched by the above two local businesses.

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points of view

Sweet dreams

I GOT WHAT I deserved.

After all, a grown man should never use a highly animated voice to say, "Hey sweetie, do you want to spend some quality time together on a nice long walk?"

Not when he owns a car.

This, after all is the sort of question that immediately causes all the dominoes to topple.

In this case, the process began with Rosie, my springer spaniel puppy, shooting me a look that said, "That's the most interesting thing you've said all day. But never call me sweetie again ..."

But I couldn't leave well enough alone, so I followed up with, "What do you say, beautiful? Do you want to go for a good long walk? I promise you after that, I'll fix you a really nice snack."

Then Jenn, who was around the corner and did not see Rosie, piped up with, "Sure, why not? I could use a walk and a snack."

steve galea

Loon Tales

Her wonderful smile quickly dissolved however, when she stepped forward, saw Rosie and said, "Oh…. you were talking to the dog…."

I felt like a man who has just realized he's walked into the middle of a minefield – while trying out a new pair of stilts. For I knew I would be cut down to size, if I was not careful every step of the way from here on in.

If there is any bright side to this, it is that Jenn spoke up before I said, "Just let me make sure I have enough poop bags."

My guess is that would have made the ensuing conversation even more awkward.

Still, it was a truly uncomfortable thing. You see, I had to turn my back on Rosie and look Jenn square in the eyes and say, "The dog? Of course not. I was talking to you. Yes, that's right. I was talking to you…"

That's because as a veteran man, and dog owner, I have learned the hard way that, if the special someone in your life asks whether the lovely words you just used were meant for her, the prudent thing to say is, "No, they are for my spouse."

Especially if your spouse is standing there with her arms crossed and a scowl on her face.

Needless to say, it is never easy to betray a good hunting dog like that. Yet, believe me, it's for the best.

Your dog will forgive you. More than that, your dog will not remind you of the incident every couple of days for the rest of your life.

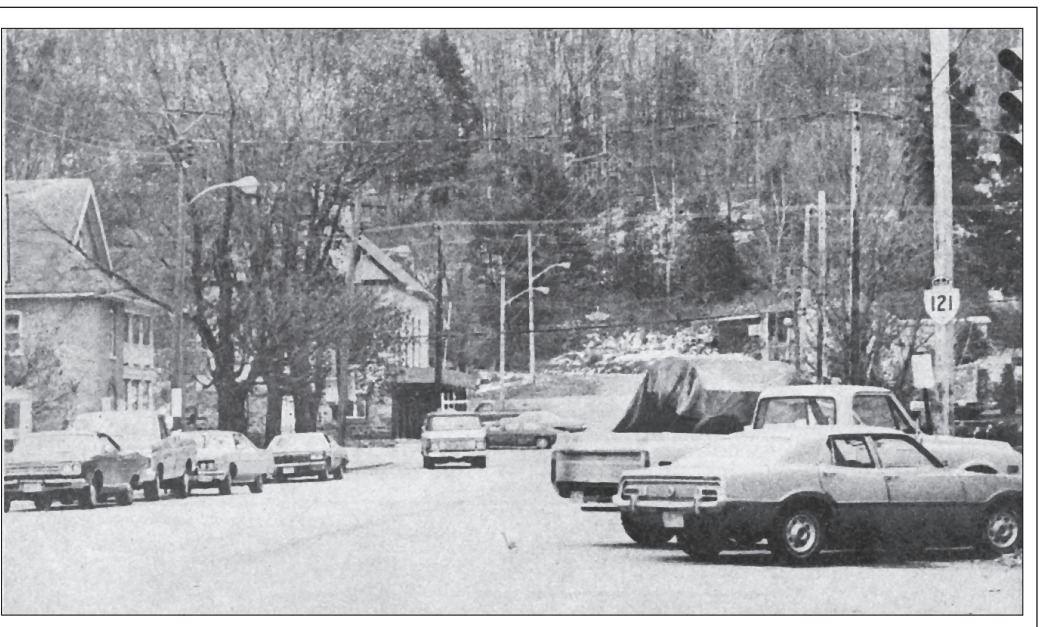
Obviously, this is still a difficult thing to do, especially if the dog in question has flushed a lot of birds, helped you get your buck or performed some amazing water retrieves – basically, all those little acts of love your spouse refuses to do.

And yet this is exactly what is expected of you, if you don't want to spend every night on a crowded dog bed for the next couple of weeks.

Instead, Jenn, Rosie and I went outside and enjoyed a good long walk.

When we returned, I was preparing snacks for both of them when I heard Jenn say, "You know, sweetie, I really enjoyed our walk together, you cute, wonderful little creature."

Which, in hindsight, was an odd thing to say to me while I was around the corner.



pic *of the* past

If you stood in the intersection of Highland and Maple streets back in 1976 and faced south this is what you would see.

letters to the editor

Slow down with new shoreline preservation bylaw

To the Editor,

Is the County declaring war against waterfront property owners?

I very recently had occasion to skim through the County's draft shoreline preservation bylaw 2020. This overly officious omnibus draft bylaw includes many new prohibitions, "applications", "permits" and draconian penalties. Its preamble contains no fewer than 21 "Whereas" clauses followed by some 60 definitions, all before the body of this new proposed law even starts and also includes an additional eight incorporated "Schedules". I am a lawyer and am only beginning to assess the impact of all that it covers – so many possible interpretations with serious implications to lakefront property owners and potential buyers, not to mention local businesses, and all this only a relatively short time after the County's previous shoreline preservation bylaw number 3505 was passed and amended.

Under this proposed law, County officers may enter property and "require information from any person." The bylaw prohibits "hindering or otherwise interfering" with an officer, however they choose to interpret this as, conveniently, neither "hindering" nor "otherwise interfering" is among the 60 defined terms. Query: if a County officer questions neighbours of a property owner and they don't "cooperate", are they "hindering or otherwise interfering" and thus subject to the bylaw's severe penalties? The proposed law grants power to give "immediate effect to any direction, requirement or order" and further envisages unlimited daily fines. Due process is apparently irrelevant: "The County may recover the costs of doing a matter or thing" by simply and conveniently adding the cost to your tax bill, and include a hefty 12% annual interest rate on top of that for good measure.

This new proposal requires extensive review and serious public debate; neither can happen over some "Zoom" meeting. I urge the County to slow down, wait for this pandemic to settle and avoid rushing this bylaw through. Please give us all a chance to absorb, review and engage in meaningful public debate about the merits and methods of this bylaw.

Jacques Amelard,
Haliburton

Give government an inch, they will take a mile

To the Editor,

Should we be sidetracked and tricked and bedeviled now, by these politicians and their phantom official experts?

Cutting to the bottom line: There is NO state of emergency that justifies sweeping away Canadian's basic freedoms. No war, no natural, no environmental or no manmade disaster here in Haliburton.

No emergency can override the meaning and spirit of our Charter of Rights and Freedoms and any enshrined riparian property useage rights.

Our government is based on the consent of the governed. WE decide. We aren't property of the State. We aren't products shaped by the State. We weren't born to be to be in "greenbelt shoreline lockdowns" and pseudo science test subjects in some grand utopian vision dreampt up by CHA and facilitated by our local part time politicians - those whom we can replace in 2 years if we feel betrayed.

We are in a tunnel. We are carrying the light. Around us are sheep and doomsayers and hostile actors. They have redefined freedom in Orwellian terms to mean obedience. They now see privation and shoreline lockdowns as consecrations to a new cause: allegiance to a brand new manufactured set of enviro standards that have suddenly washed ashore.

The infernal logic of this is inescapable, once you allow the crossing of the Constitutional line. Then, freedom is gone. Then Canada too is gone. Remember this bylaw is "Go Forward". This is code for an evolution of more enviro restrictions which will become even more intrusive, based on "their" (not your) ever-changing, evolving beliefs over time. Give government an inch , they will take a mile!

I've spent the past nine months proving that their theories are a scientific fraud. There is no emergency or great danger. But even if there were, the role of cottagers in the grand scheme is grossly overstated. That bright line from freedom to slavery cannot be breached. Or we all go down.

Instead, we have to rise up. We have to live life, move forward and above all keep our cottage dreams and lifestyles alive by raising out collective voices against this new wave of oppressive forces that will deny your long held and valued rights and freedoms as cottagers and elsewhere.

David Hopkins Howe
Minden Hills

Pandemic pauses Keith Tallman until next winter

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

The following are Highlands East briefs from the Dec. 8 meeting via YouTube.

As part of recent measures to curb the rising COVID-19 numbers, the Highlands East Emergency Control Group (ECG) has decided to not move forward with putting in ice at the Keith Tallman Memorial Arena this year. The report stated: "Limited groups sizes and operational recommendations would make ice rentals difficult for both the municipality and the user groups."

This was part of a recent decision delivered during the ECG's update to council by Highlands East fire chief Chris Baughman. Other ongoing efforts include having meetings held electronically and facilitating staff to be able to work from home, having the building department and the township's main office open to the public by appointment only with limited numbers of people allowed inside at one time. The last update council received from the ECG was on June 9. With the reported COVID-19 case numbers being relatively low compared to the rest of the province at that time, the ECG had been developing plans and policies to reopen buildings and offices.

Township approves agreement with winter burial service provider for pandemic

Highlands East Township has entered into an agreement for service, if needed, with Uxbridge-based CemeCare, a company that has the expertise to conduct winter burials.

This agreement is part of preparations for the possibility of required winter burials related to COVID-19. The township typically does not provide the winter burial service during "special circumstances" such as with COVID-19.

From the staff report, as prepared by Robyn Rogers, it references the direction from the Bereavement Authority of Ontario, who recommend cemetery operators "to continue burials as far into the winter months as possible while safe to do so and to alleviate any over storage capacity that may occur due to an increase of individuals dying."

The report continues, "This measure is being taken as the BAO does not want to see a situation where there is an increase of deaths and not having enough storage to hold the bodies until spring."

Cost for this service, which will only be available while the pandemic is active, will be assumed by the "Internment Rights Holder."

Community Safety Zone for the 507

The township is supporting the municipality of Trent Lakes to establish a a Community Safety Zone on County Road 507.

The motion came about from a letter seeking support from Highlands East after recommendation by the Police Services Board to establish Community Safety Zone to reduce the motorcycle accidents and fatalities.

Although the section Trent Lakes will establish as a Community Safety Zone is not in Haliburton County, it could help with calming motorists, who have been known to use the route to come from Peterborough County to Haliburton County as a time trial race, said Deputy Mayor Cec Ryall.

He called this a "notorious piece of road."

He adds the section from Flynn's Corner to Gooderham affects the people of Highlands East.

"Anything we can do to alleviate that kind of a safety challenge in my mind is something we should support especially when it is the southern entrance to the municipality," he said.

Mayor Dave Burton pointed out this is a county road and would be discussed at the county level.

Ryall acknowledges this, but said support is necessary because the request was specifically addressed to Highlands East.

"It is our southern entrance that it might be worth our while to look at," Ryall said.

> *"Anything we can do to alleviate that kind of a safety challenge in my mind is something we should support, especially when it is the southern entrance to the municipality*
>
> — Highlands East Deputy Mayor Cec Ryall

OPP welcome help

OPP officers from the Haliburton Highlands Detachment stand outside the Highlands Pharmacy, located on Highland Street, following a robbery that happened close to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 9 in Haliburton. The incident is still under investigation. Investigators are encouraging anyone with information regarding the incident or the suspects' identity to contact the Haliburton Highlands Detachment at 705-286-1431 or toll-free at 1-888-310-1122. If you wish to remain anonymous please contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477)./DARREN LUM Staff

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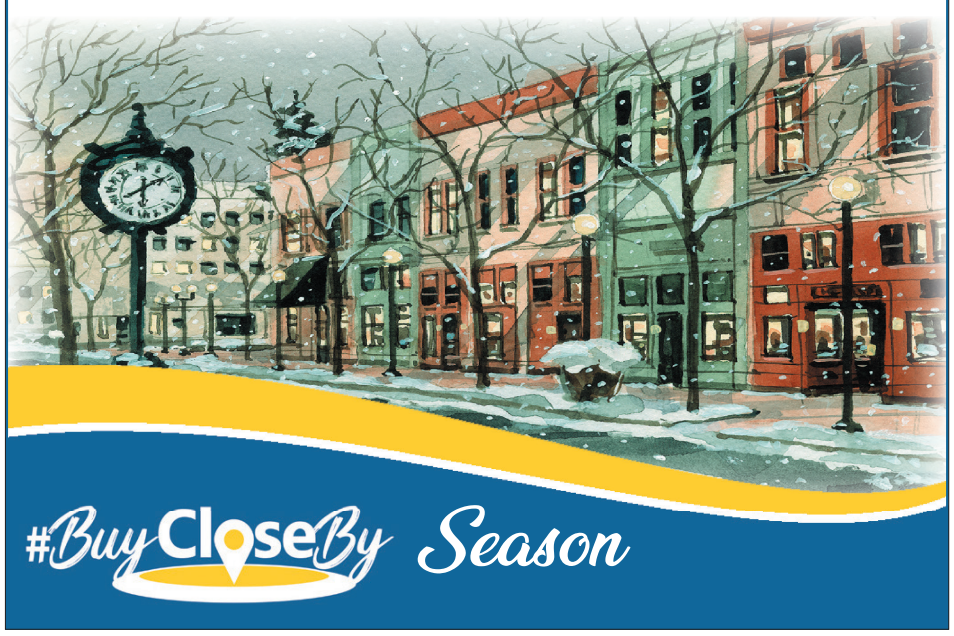

Bridges require millions in work

CHAD INGRAM

Staff Reporter

The county's bridges and culverts will require tens of millions of dollars in repairs and replacements over the coming decades.

Haliburton County councillors received a presentation from Harold Cleywegt, managing director with Keystone Bridge Management Corp. during their Dec. 9 meeting, the county having hired Keystone to complete an inspection of its bridges and culverts.

The inspection included 18 bridges and 24 large culverts, and showed $10.35 million in capital needs related to these structures between 2021 and 2028, "to bring the structures up to a good state of repair," Cleywegt said.

"We're recommending four culverts be replaced, and five bridges are in need of what we call a comprehensive rehabilitation," he said.

More than half of the surface area of the bridges included in the inspection are at least 50 years old, with some 110 years in age.

"Typically, as bridges get older, they require more capital investment to sustain their life and to maximize the remaining life left in them," Cleywegt said.

For the period of 2021 to 2028, the firm's recommendation was that an average of $1.3 million per year be spent on bridges and culverts, with the heaviest degree of need in the next few years, between 2021 and 2023.

Nearly 13 per cent of the county's bridge and culvert inventory has been renewed in the past 20 year, with Cleywegt adding the desirable renewal rate is typically one per cent per year. "Haliburton County's doing OK, but could be doing better," he said.

Over the next 40 years, there will be a need to replace about $27 million in structures, and in total the county is looking at approximately $92 million in asset replacement over the next 80 to 90 years.

"This is excellent information for us to receive prior to our budgeting process," said Algonquin Highlands Deputy Mayor and County Warden Liz Danielsen. "Not unexpected, but still pretty eye-opening when you start looking at the amounts."

Haliburton's Century21 real estate agency will soon be under new ownership. Brandon and Megan Nimigon (left and second left) will take over the brokerage from Andrew and Anne Hodgson (right and second right). Andrew will be staying on with the agency as a selling agent. /MIKE BAKER Staff

New owners want to take Century21 'to the next level'

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

There will soon be a new face at the helm of Century21 Granite Realty Group in Haliburton, and it's one you just might recognize.

Brandon Nimigon, and his wife Megan, will take ownership of the local brokerage in the new year, purchasing the business from Andrew and Anne Hodgson. Brandon has been an agent with the firm since 2015, and has long harboured ambitions of leading his own agency. When he was approached by Andrew earlier this year with a view to taking over, it was an opportunity he simply could not pass up.

While he himself has around five years of on-the-job experience, Brandon has been around the real estate industry for most of his life. His mother, Karen, has been an agent in the Haliburton area for more than 20 years. He remembers the days when he would attend open houses, help to put up real estate signs and mark property lines.

"I've always kind of been entrenched in the business a little bit. When I first started out my career, I was doing broadcast and digital sales. My wife and I moved around a little bit, but decided a few years ago that we wanted to move back home, back to Haliburton," Brandon said. "When we did that, I took stock of my career and decided that the real estate business was where I wanted to be."

Upon joining Century21, Brandon sat down with Andrew to discuss long-term goals and narrow down on what he wanted to do, and where his focus would be. Even at that early stage, Brandon knew he wanted to go into business for himself.

It was that kind of attitude that set him apart, and made him the ideal choice to take over the brokerage once the Hodgsons decided it was time to pass the torch.

Having owned the firm for 11 years, purchasing from Derrell and Kim Stamp back in 2009, the Hodgsons were adamant they would only sell the business if they had an appropriate succession plan in place. While Andrew will stay on as an agent, he's happy to be handing the managerial reins over to someone he trusts.

"For us, it's just the right time [to sell]. This is a good succession plan – I get to stay on, and will keep selling, and we provide an opportunity to someone young and hungry to take over," Andrew said. "I'm involved in a lot of different committees in Haliburton, and the one thing I hear at every table is how we want to retain our youth. Well, this is a young family here that has decided they want to raise their family, live and work here. This is what we talk about all the time, about how we want to have our younger people stay in our communities. This is how you do it."

For Anne, she said the important thing for her was ensuring the brokerage remained locally-owned.

"We wanted to make sure whoever took over loves the community just as much as we do. Ethics was a really important consideration for us as well. We know Brandon and Megan will be strong leaders going forward for us," Anne said.

To say that Brandon and Megan are excited about this new adventure would be an understatement. They don't plan on changing much, if anything at all, in the short-term, with Brandon saying he just wants to maintain the fine work that has gone on at Century21 since he joined the firm five years ago.

Looking ahead though, he feels it's imperative the agency keeps up with the times and adapts as new technologies become available.

"Our business really has changed dramatically over the past ten years. As more tech comes into our line of work, we need to adapt so that we stay relevant to our clients. My main goal moving forward will be to stay relevant, and keep the awesome team we have here in place,"

see LOCAL page 10

This holiday season needs to be different.

The safest way to celebrate indoors is only with the people who live in your home. People who live alone can get together only with one other home.

Gatherings with friends and extended family can carry an increased risk of getting and spreading COVID-19. Consider celebrating outdoors or virtually with others that are not part of your household.

Know the gathering limits in your area before you choose to entertain with family and friends indoors. Indoor gatherings are not permitted in regions in Grey-Lockdown.

For all gatherings with anyone you do not live with:

- maintain 2 metres physical distance
- wear a face covering
- avoid potlucks or shared utensils
- ensure everyone washes hands regularly, including before and after meals

Self-isolate if you are sick, even if your symptoms are mild and ask guests to stay home if they feel unwell.

Follow provincial and local public health advice to keep you and your loved ones safe this holiday.

Stopping the spread, starts with you.

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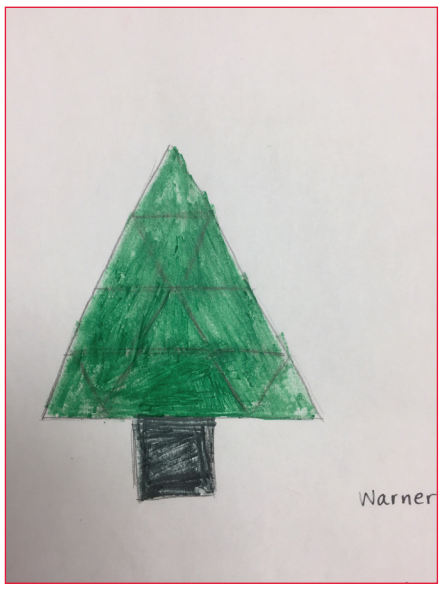
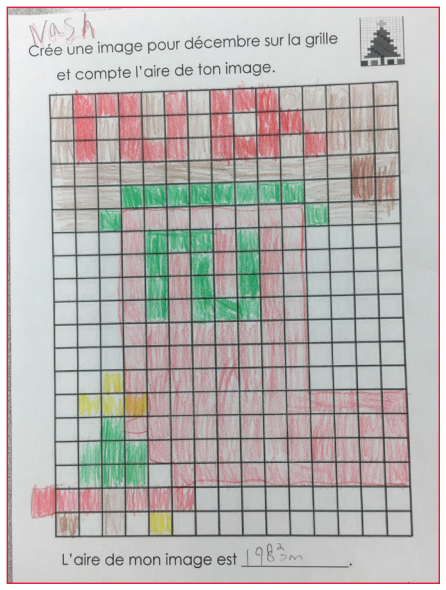
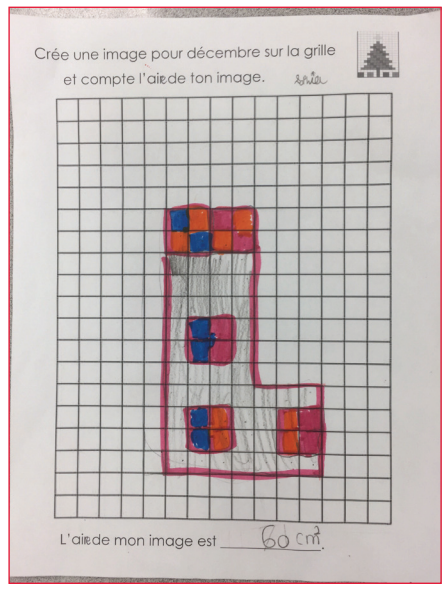
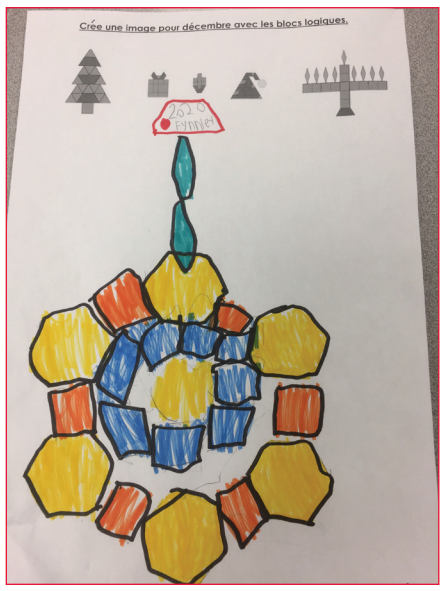
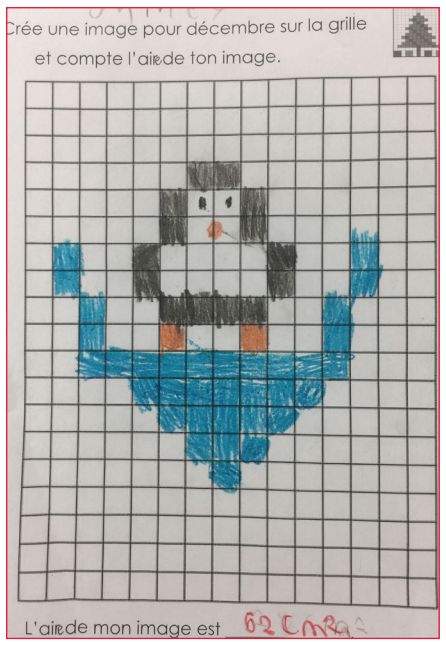
Holiday artwork by students at Stuart Baker Elementary School











Local realtor predicts 'strong market' as we head into the new year

from page 9

Brandon said. "We all get along so well. I want to keep the same working environment going, continue to grow the business and really just take things to the next level."

That mentality falls right in line with the way things are going in Haliburton County right now. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began in March, the local real estate market has taken off, with houses in the area disappearing off the market within days of being listed. It's quickly become the norm for bidding wars amongst multiple potential buyers to drive the final price on a home well beyond asking.

While Brandon admits 2020 has been an unprecedented year for the local real estate market, it's something he says he saw coming.

"Everyone has said how crazy, how different this year has been for real estate in Haliburton County, but we've been pretty crazy up here for the past five years," Brandon said. "Looking back to 2017, we were in a very similar market, where there were multiple offers on properties, limited inventory and prices going through the roof. This year I think just kicked things into that next level. With a lot of people not working out of their office anymore, they're taking advantage by selling their small downtown apartment and buying a beautiful cottage."

> *"Everyone has said how crazy, how different this year has been for real estate in Haliburton County, but we've been pretty crazy up here for the past five years.*
>
> — Brandon Nimigon, Century21

Brandon says he sees the trend continuing, even after the COVID-19 pandemic is over.

"If a [downtown Toronto] business can save $100,000 [a month] on rent, and have their staff work from home, most likely they're going to do it. So, I can see this continuing for a little while at least," Brandon added. "While it does continue, I believe it's going to lead to a really strong market up here."

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Destination plan recommends more workforce development

CHAD INGRAM

Staff Reporter

Stronger workforce development and a better alignment between the efforts of local governments and private businesses are among the suggestions in a destination development plan for the Haliburton Highlands, the final version of which Haliburton County councillors received during a Dec. 9 meeting.

The county hired Vancouver-based firm MMGY NextFactor in 2019 to compile the plan, which looks at ways to develop the Haliburton Highlands as a tourism destination and also to market it in a more widespread fashion. The process has included a number of public input sessions with county residents, officials and stakeholders, including focus groups and town hall meetings. As Greg Oates, vice president of innovation with the firm, noted during last week's meeting, the compilation of the plan for the Highlands took longer than usual due to the COVID-19 pandemic causing a delay in the process.

"In tourism, we're looking at trying to compel visitors to continue to come back," Oates said. " . . . When visitors return to a destination, it's not because they want to feel like a tourist, it's because they want to feel like they're part of a community and they identify with that community."

In that way, Oates said its important that the majority of county residents be in agreement about the importance of tourism to the county's economy, and how everyone is essentially connected to it in some way.

"The belief in the value of tourism is just as important as the overall destination infrastructure, and the overall visitor experience," he said.

"Tourism development is about much more than just marketing when you look at all of things that need to happen," Oates added. " ... Probably the biggest challenge we see, and where there's the most room for immediate gains, is this lack of alignment between the public and private sectors, and you often have goals and initiatives being put forth by private interests, but when you look what happens within a city, a town, a county hall, and council, there isn't always necessarily, if not an agreed upon alliance, just an awareness of what everyone's doing."

One of the many recommendations from a service delivery review the county recently had completed for itself and its four lower-tier municipalities, was the creation of an overarching economic development position that would serve all five local governments and co-ordinate economic development activities.

While feedback data showed many residents are pleased with and have confidence in the county's #MyHaliburtonHighlands branding and its marketing efforts, the response was less glowing regarding local workforce development.

"Workforce development in the Haliburton Highlands, however, was especially glaring in how it compares behind other communities that have participated in DestinationNEXT," the plan reads.

The plan also touched on the county's lack of a public transportation system.

"Our goal is to really drive home the idea that mobility equals opportunity," Oates said. "The easier it is to get around, the easier it is to spend money."

"I think there's some small pieces in here that we've been trying to leverage over the past 20 years," said Algonquin Highlands Mayor Carol Moffatt, "but there's lots of challenges that have come with that. But it's really wonderful to see them captured, connected in one place, focused, and we've got a document that can be the foundation for moving forward."

"The piece that resonates the most with me is the community alignment piece," Moffatt said. "And this is a tremendous body of work that's come from the public and its success or its failure is only going to rely on the community's ability and willingness to work together. There has been, historically, over a long, long time, a disappointing amount of in-fighting and criticism and what's that old saying, blowing out someone else's candle doesn't make yours shine any brighter? So, I just look forward to seeing this move forward.

Dysart et al Deputy Mayor Pat Kennedy questioned how many more visitors or residents the Haliburton Highlands needed, particularly with more people staying in the area for longer periods due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

> ***"Our goal is to really drive home the idea that mobility equals opportunity ... The easier it is to get around, the easier it is to spend money.***
>
> — Greg Oates, MMGY NextFactor

"I think this plan has come forward at a very unique time," Kennedy said. "I think that what you've given us is your thoughts on looking to the vision of five years from now, [when] we're already there."

"We're now seeing lineups at a grocery stores in November to get in, we're now seeing lineups at our gas stations, gas stations running out of gas, increased demands for services," Kennedy said. "I think this is an opportunity for us to take a look at this, but we also have to hit the pause button. I think we have to ask, how many is too many? Our lakes are overcrowded, there's people there to the max every week now. Higher demands on waste management, all of infrastructure."

"The other part of it is workforce," Kennedy said. "We've had a huge number of people decide to move here . . . The people have moved here, they're looking for work. There isn't work that's year-round, sustainable, good-paying jobs."

Helping hand for holidays

OPP auxiliary police officer Marc Jones accepts a donation from a customer outside the Haliburton Foodland during the Help Us Fill the Cruiser effort on Saturday, Dec. 5. OPP constables and members of the auxiliary accepted donations in Haliburton at the Foodland from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and at Todd's Independent Grocer from 1 to 3 p.m. on Saturday. There was also a Help Us Fill the Crusier effort in Minden at the Foodland and the Valumart on the same day. The collection went to local food banks./DARREN LUM Staff

TLDSB hires new superintendent to replace retiring Dave Golden

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Trillium Lakelands District School Board (TLDSB) has a new superintendent of learning.

At the school board's annual organizational meeting, held in Lindsay on Dec. 8, it was announced that Jay MacJanet would be taking on the role, replacing the retiring Dave Golden. He will join TLDSB on Jan. 4, 2021.

"We look forward to welcoming Jay to our senior administration team," said TLDSB director of education Wes Hahn. "Jay's experience within the education system will bring a new perspective to the table, and assist the board in its commitment to high levels of student achievement."

MacJanet's main role, Hahn says, will be supporting schools and working with administrators and teachers to further develop their instructional knowledge. It was noted at the meeting that TLDSB has around 16,000 students enrolled across 48 schools in the area – 41 elementary schools and seven high schools. In total, the board employs around 3,000 staff.

With an extensive 15 year background as a school administrator within the District School Board of Niagara, MacJanet has been described as an "exemplary instructional leader", by Hahn.

"He is a respected leader for instructional knowledge, and has a passion for student learning. [MacJanet] understands the commitment and passion it takes to ensure all students can learn and achieve success. He will be a great addition to TLDSB," Hahn said.

MacJanet plans to move from the Niagara region to Muskoka, along with his wife and four children.

"I am truly excited about the opportunity and privilege to serve the students and communities of TLDSB," MacJanet said. "My hope is to support the current learning culture, as well as to further enhance the development of student achievement through continued collaboration with students, staff and the community."

Land trust celebrates wetlands, discusses advocacy for protection

SUE TIFFIN

Staff Reporter

During the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust annual general meeting held on Dec.2, a successful 2019 was celebrated, as were positive gains for the land trust in 2020 which included the opening of Barnum Creek Nature Reserve trails and essential work toward protecting area wetlands. The meeting is usually held in June, but instead took place via Zoom, with members connecting online, due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Land trust properties offer outdoor space in 2020

"What would the land trust be without our land?," said Mary-Lou Gerstl, past-chair, during a message from the chair address. "Our five properties represent nature at its finest, donated out of love by those who spent years reforesting, nurturing and envisioning its existence in their natural state in perpetuity. Their gift to the Haliburton Highlands and to the citizens of Canada not only benefits the environment but provides an opportunity for exercise, quiet reflection and ease of mind."

Gerstl said in a year plagued by COVID-19, a record number of visitors – up to dozens in a day - had been seen at the two land trust properties – Dahl Forest, and Barnum Creek Nature Reserve – open to the public.

"It is good to know that during these trying and stressful times, we can offer our beautiful properties for people to get out

see 2020 HAS page 16

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Don Smith remembered for love of nature, land, storytelling

SUE TIFFIN

Staff Reporter

A few minutes into a video of an interview Don Smith participated in as part of a Haliburton Highlands Land Trust storytelling series last year, he pauses, cranes his neck behind and to the left, then a little bit more, and says, "Oh, there's a woodpecker on the suet."

The background music quiets as Smith reaches down, still with his eyes on the bird, to grab his ever-present binoculars that are tucked between his body and the arm of the chair he's sitting in.

"Where are you?" he asks the bird as he focuses the binoculars out the window. And then, "It's a female downy woodpecker." He puts the binoculars down and pauses, hand on chin: "Which I will write down eventually, but they're here every day."

It's a scene so telling of Smith's passion for nature and conservation, that he might be interrupted mid-sentence by the sight of a familiar bird, which he then takes the time to acknowledge and appreciate.

Last month, Smith died at age 90, his obituary noting "[h]is legacy will live on in the lessons and teachings about nature he so freely shared with all lucky enough to have known him."

One of the people counting themselves fortunate to have known Smith is his lifelong best friend, painter and fellow naturalist, Robert Bateman. The friends were classmates, and joined a naturalist group for young people at the Royal Ontario Museum. Through "a flick of fate," they both enjoyed cottages in the Haliburton area.

"He was very, very steady, level, kind of quiet and you could always count on him," Bateman told the *Echo* from his home in Salt Spring. "All my memories of Don are warm and comfortable and favourable."

Some of Bateman's earliest memories of Smith are of the trio [together with Al Gordon] playing and hiking, sometimes in among the poison ivy, hopping on their bikes and heading "in all kinds of different directions," or on the TTC to go to Sunnyside, or to the Humber River.

"We were very keen naturalists and almost every weekend we would head off on our bicycles or go hiking," said Bateman. "Don and Al would come and hang out because I was busy painting, and they would just sit around and watch me paint or chat or carry on conversations and then often we'd go and stretch our legs and hike along the valley and see what we could see."

The Bateman family sunroom was an ideal spot to watch for birds.

"We used to own a few bird books," said Smith in the land trust video. "We would quiz each other. We'd cover up the name under the picture of the birds and quiz each other on them, so we learned a lot there."

"In the early days we listed birds to see how many we could see," said Bateman. And then, laughing: "And then we became sort of scientific snobs and said listing is for little old ladies in tennis shoes. We're young men and we're vigorous and we don't do that anymore. But then we went back to it again, I guess when we grew up to become little old ladies in tennis shoes ourselves."

Smith called himself a "small mammalogist," spending most of his life studying small mammals, which was encouraged through the naturalist club, and which he was able to pursue further when he joined Bateman at the Algonquin Wildlife Research Station in the late 1940s, participating in small mammal and bird surveys.

Last year, naturalist Don Smith recounted stories from throughout his life, including the donation of land by he and wife Lorraine to the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust for preservation and protection./Screenshot from the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust video *Connected: Our Land Our Stories,* created by Tammy Rea and Midori Nagai

Left, Don Smith with lifelong friend Robert Bateman, birdwatching north of Toronto around 1950. Bateman said birdwatching teenagers weren't considered to be particularly cool at that time, and his and Smith's shared interest brought them closer together. /Photo submitted by Robert Bateman

"That might have been one of the turning points of his life, but he was already interested in that, and he was very good academically and so he went into the sciences, and obviously became a PhD," said Bateman.

He remembers Smith sharing a grant with him, so he didn't go into the forest alone, to work on researching two different types of mice and how their locations might overlap.

"We camped in that section between Belleville and Ottawa trapping every night, setting up these traplines to try to sort out which mouse was living in this area and which was living in that area," said Bateman. "Well, then he would try to figure out how it could be explained. I'm not sure he ever did explain it. But we collected dozens and dozens of mice. ... That was one time that he did hire me to be his assistant. Even though he was younger than me, I was his assistant."

Smith worked on Southampton Island in the Arctic, as British Columbia's first park interpretation specialist at E.C. Manning Park, and studied at the University of Toronto, completing three advanced degrees in zoology, including his PhD.

His interest in small mammals continued as he joined Carleton University as a professor of biology, and as curator of the Museum of Zoology until he retired in 1995, at which point he said he became a sort of full-time field naturalist.

"I'm sure, and because I wasn't one of his students or anything like that, I'm sure there were individual students who, Don would have changed their lives, through his influence and teaching and his wonderful, quiet demeanour that was just so appealing," said Bateman.

While small mammals were Smith's passion, Bateman notes they are nocturnal, and so not as "obvious" as birds, which "are kind of like a starter for most naturalists."

The friends went to Bonnechere Caves together to study bats, but they would also visit Point Pelee or Long Point with a few others to take in migratory birds as they return from the south – trips so affecting that Bateman's younger brother chose to move to Long Point.

"Every single bird, if we were driving along in the car, and a bird would fly up, we would need to make mental note, almost without thinking, what is it?," said Bateman. "Sometimes if we didn't know what it was we'd pull over and get a better look at it to see what it was. It was just a compulsive, we had to know every bird that crossed our path. That would be typical of Don."

Ed Poropat, a local birder himself, had numerous occasions on the trails in Haliburton County with Smith, who he said was a well-rounded naturalist whose knowledge extended beyond mammals, and whose information was always incredibly detailed and accurate.

"Don was renowned for speaking slowly and deliberately," he said. "A quick five-second response often led to a five-minute detailed explanation. Apparently, his students would fondly joke that Don spoke 'in 90-minute bursts'."

Sheila Ziman, a member of the HHLT board of directors who met Smith through the field naturalists' group said Smith participated in bird walks in Haliburton County for at least 20 years, traveling here in more recent years from Stittsville "at some ungodly hour" to participate.

"I'd arrive and he'd already have his binoculars up, and he'd already have six or seven birds identified," said Ziman, who noted he could identify birds by ear, and was always patient and willing to share the knowledge he had.

"He's so unique, there will never be another Don," she said. "He was never impatient with anybody, or condescending. He just treated everybody equally, every question was worthy of an answer, and every observation was worthy of further prying into to make sure that it was correct or to get more information from it. He knew so much, but he was always looking to other people to add to his knowledge."

Smith was part of the Haliburton Highlands Field Naturalists, as well as the Kawartha Field Naturalists club, walked along the Rail Trail with his beloved dog, Goldie, and also participated in smaller group walks in this area.

"He was never far from his binoculars, which were a permanent feature around his neck, but also this little notebook," said Ziman. "He always had a little notebook, and in his sort of chicken scrawl writing, he would write down every bird that he saw or heard, and I just think there was a treasure trove of information in those notebooks ... it goes back quite awhile."

Don Kerr remembers Smith as being a great friend to everyone in the field naturalists group.

"Don Smith was always a strong pillar of our group and an encyclopedia of knowledge regarding anything to do with birds, animals, plants, or nature," said Kerr. "He would always bring specimens to every meeting, and when he talked everyone always listened with great attention to every detail which he methodically explained. He laid everything out in a detailed manner which was an inspiration to all of us."

Poropat agreed that Smith was a very patient person.

"During spring bird walks, for example, Don would always take the time to not only point out birds, but he made sure you would 'get on it' with your binoculars," he said. "All the while, he would mention what field marks to look for to help you identify it accurately."

Poropat called Smith "the consummate scientist," and remembers his passion and enthusiasm fondly.

"On a bird walk one spring, our small group suddenly realized that Don had dropped back and was no longer with us," he told the *Echo*. "We turned around to see where he was and found him lying in the middle of the rail trail. Immediately, there was sheer panic as we all thought Don had possibly had a heart attack, or had fallen and injured himself. We rushed back to find Don alive and well, laying comfortably on his back. He said his back was a little sore so he would was just taking a short break. Besides, the birding was good from down there."

While appreciating what the natural world offered, Smith worked throughout his life to preserve it.

In 1962, Smith worked alongside other likeminded naturalists to bring attention to the value of the Mer Bleue peat bog, a 28-square kilometre wetland in Ottawa that is now one of the few of its kind in the southern part of Canada.

He was awarded for his efforts almost 50 years later in 2010 with a Mer Bleue Wetland Conservation Award from the National Capital Commission, which Smith attributed to his "persistent badgering."

"In December 1962, there was a little squib in the *Ottawa Journal* that just said, the [National Capital Commission] was considering for the local municipalities to dump garbage in the Mer Bleue peat bog. When we read this, we were quite alarmed," Smith was quoted in the *Ottawa Citizen* as having said during the awards

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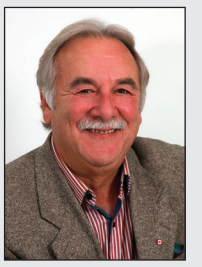
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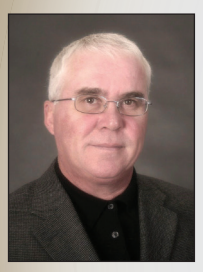
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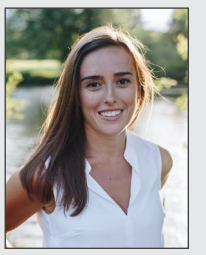
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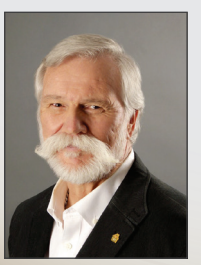
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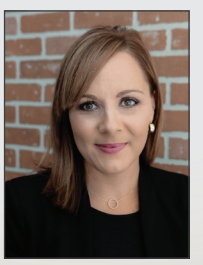
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2020 has been a 'positive' year for HHLT, despite pandemic

from page 13

and walk or hike our trails for exercise or simply pass a few calm moments and reap the cognitive and health benefits of being outside in the natural world," said Gerstl.

Because the AGM happened so late in the year, treasurer David Bathe was able to offer an update on what 2020 looked like so far in terms of land trust finances, and his report was positive.

Donations amassed so far were at almost $6,000 by the end of October, compared to last year's donations – apart from bequests and foundation offerings – of $8,000.

"There's been quite a flurry of activity in November and we still have December," said Bathe.

While last year, $3,100 was raised in memberships, $5,000 of memberships have been purchased in 2020. Last year's gala raised more than $10,000 for the land trust, and though such an event couldn't be held this year due to pandemic restrictions, "fundraisers got creative," Bathe said, and still raised almost $7,000 through an online auction.

With the interest in Barnum Creek Nature Reserve, $2,500 was raised in acre purchases, and $500 was raised through Dahl Forest acre purchases.

"2020, which we were very worried about is turning out just fine, and we're lucky to have the support we have from people in the community and actually people from all over," said Bathe.

Grants help fund land trust accomplishments in 2019

Gerstl said 2019 had been a great year for the land trust in terms of both financial outcome and accomplishments.

"Our focus continues to be on our core responsibilities to maintain and protect our five properties, community education that promotes sound stewardship practices and research work focused on the conservation of the rich biodiversity of the Haliburton Highlands," she said.

The land trust obtained four grants in the 2019/2020 year, totalling $134,000, to fund further wetlands work, including the development and testing of a new wetland mapping technique.

"The Ontario Trillium Foundation SEED grant of $71,000 was used to develop and test a new wetland mapping technique that has now provided our county and municipal planners with more accurate mapping for future development decision making," read the official chair message notes. "Feedback from the county and municipal planners was very positive and has led to a data sharing agreement between the County of Haliburton and HHLT. In this grant, we also assessed private landowners' awareness and support for wetland conservation in the geographic townships of Lutterworth, Snowdon and Glamorgan. There was strong support for protecting our wetlands as a natural solution to the effects of climate change."

Additionally, the land trust was awarded a $36,400 grant from the Environment Canada and Climate Change, Climate Action Fun, "to raise the awareness of the impacts of climate change through outreach, community engagement and wetland evaluation." The grant allowed the land trust to map and evaluate Kendrick Creek Wetland Complex, an 850-hectare area that includes the Fred and Pearl Barry Wetland Reserve. The evaluation work done resulted in the Kendrick Creek Wetland Complex being recognized as a provincially significant wetland.

"[A PSW designation] is the highest form of protection that a wetland can receive in the province of Ontario," said Gerstl.

From the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, Species at Risk fund, the land trust was awarded $16,000 to develop best management practices for the five-lined-skink and identify potentially suitable habitat for the least bittern throughout the County of Haliburton, as well as remove woody regeneration in a large field at Barnum Creek Nature Reserve.

"The HHLT is proud to have played a key role in the PSW designation for the Kendrick Creek Wetland Complex and the mapping and evaluation of the Lochlin Wetland Complex that took place in 2020 with funding from RBC Foundation," said Gerstl."The mapping and evaluations were performed by Paul Heaven, Glenside Ecological Services Limited through funding received by HHLT."

The TD Friends of the Environment awarded the land trust $11,000 in 2019 to plan and implement the Land Trust Discovery Days Program, and provide interpretive signage at Barnum Creek.

Gerstl noted the wide range of supporters of the land trust both at individual and corporate levels, acknowledging dollars raised through increasing membership, $10,000 in funding from the Coral and Bill Martin Family Foundation to offset legal costs associated with the Barnum Creek Nature Reserve and a $20,000 bequest from the estate of Ian Daniel, a former land trust chair and founding member who passed away just before the 2018 AGM. Additionally, the Haliburton County Development Corporation's donation of $4,000 for trail development and signage at Barnum Creek Nature Reserve was acknowledged. Partnerships with Trent University and U-Links, and land trust volunteers were also celebrated during Gerstl's address.

Wetlands concerns

Member Ian Darragh asked if the current changes being proposed in provincial legislation, would affect the Kendrick Creek Wetland Complex designation in any way. Announced in November, proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act would limit the power of conservation authorities in the development approval process according to environmental advocacy groups.

"It is of concern to us as well," said Gerstl.

"Without being a political organization we've been very close to what is happening with the provincial government and some of the lifting of the environment control that we've seen," she said. "Time will tell and I'm just hoping that enough people will let their voices be heard because to lose the wetlands, that would just be a terrible, terrible thing to have happen. They're so important to us ... to the people of Haliburton, they act as a sponge, they clean our water, they mitigate the terrible flooding that's taking place in Minden and elsewhere in the province. We're concerned, we're very concerned."

Member Douglas Auld asked if a meeting with MPP Laurie Scott had been contemplated.

Gerstl said the land trust has tried to be non-political, which director Sheila Ziman said was necessary given the organization's charity status, due to CRA rules about advocacy, however encouraged members as individuals to voice concerns with local political representatives. Ziman said the land trust was able to do education around the importance and value of wetlands, and that political representatives throughout the county as well as municipal staff were well-versed in the necessity of wetlands in the area. The land trust is also in constant communication with neighbouring land trusts regarding protected properties and any potential threat to that land.

For more information about the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust, visit haliburtonlandtrust.ca.

Crossword brought to you by

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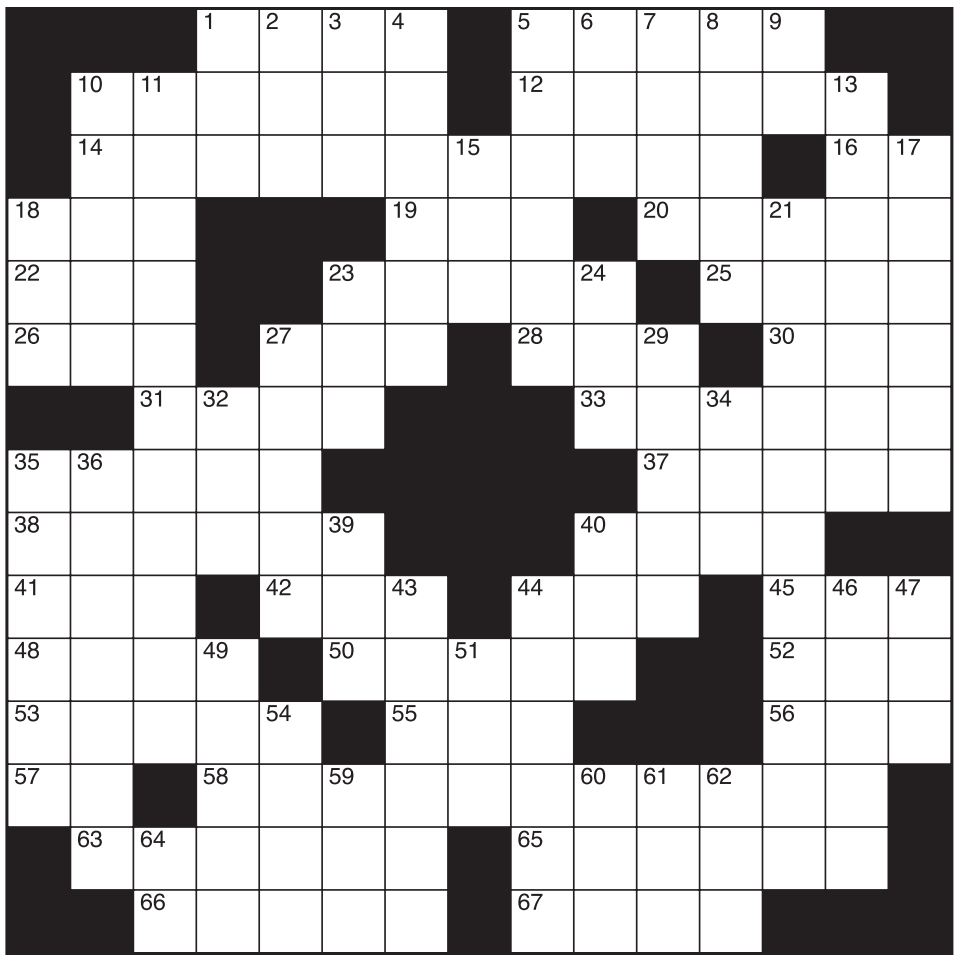

CLUES ACROSS
1. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
5. 2014 Winter Olympics host
10. Soft fabric
12. Covered in flowers
14. Works at a college or university
16. Keeps us cool
18. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
19. Similar
20. Birthplace of Muhammad
22. They __
23. Preamble to a book
25. Southern China people
26. Hair product
27. The woman
28. Partner to cheese
30. One point north of due east
31. Round Dutch cheese
33. Be in awe of
35. Christmas song
37. Emits coherent radiation
38. Something that is comparable to another
40. Monetary unit
41. The cutting part of a drill
42. Resinlike substance secreted by certain insects
44. Touch lightly
45. Toyota SUV
48. __ and Andy, TV show
50. Made less dangerous
52. Assets under management (abbr.)
53. Nostrils
55. Moved quickly
56. Thai isthmus
57. TV personality Roker
58. Honors anew
63. Rags
65. One who obtains pleasure from inflicting pain or others
66. Marketplaces
67. Dark brown or black

CLUES DOWN
1. Nowhere to be found (abbr.)
2. Not new
3. Brew
4. Stain with mud
5. Chief or leader
6. Luke SkywalkerÕs mentor __-Wan
7. Type of sauce
8. Sharpens
9. Priestess loved by Zeus
10. Jean Henri __, French entomologist
11. Regulates supply of fuel
13. Disturbing and horrifying
15. Equal (prefix)
17. Hosts film festival
18. Tattered piece of clothing
21. Rich desserts
23. Unique motor (abbr.)
24. Disfigure
27. Chemical substance
29. Slang for famous person
32. Department of Labor
34. The A-team rode around in one
35. Beach cabin
36. Living things
39. Gun (slang)
40. Disconsolate
43. Stroke gently
44. Actress Richards
46. "Cletus Hogg" actor
47. Returned material authorization (abbr.)
49. Brazilian mountain range
51. Upset
54. One with supernatural insight
59. Insecticide
60. Taxi
61. "Much __ about nothing"
62. Cannister
64. Popular clothing retailer

Answers on page 14

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Ministry investigating North Shore Road blast

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

An incident that occurred back on Dec. 2 that has some area residents believed could have been an earthquake or home explosion turned out to be a "blast gone wrong" at the Thomas Contracting Quarry, located on North Shore Road near Highway 35 in Algonquin Highlands.

Shortly before 2 p.m. dozens of people, some as far away as Minden and Haliburton Village, reported experiencing a loud blast and subsequent rumbling. While there was much immediate speculation online about what could have caused the issue, Algonquin Highlands Mayor Carol Moffatt moved quickly to allay the public's fears.

"As everything shimmied and shook on my desk at home, I blurted out things I won't put on this page. I wondered if it was an earthquake or rock blast; and after making a few quick calls I can confirm the blast occurred in the aggregate pit on North Shore Road," Moffatt posted on her political Facebook page.

While the pit is owned by Thomas Contracting, they weren't the ones responsible for last week's blast. According to Gary Wheeler, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP), blasting operations at the site have been contracted out to Fowler Construction, who in turn subcontracted the blasting work to Austin Powder Ltd.

The incident was reported to both the MECP and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

"The ministry is working to determine the cause of the blasting noise limit exceedance, any potential violation and address public concerns. Currently, it is too early to determine the results of the ministry's review and assessment of the incident," Wheeler informed the *Echo*.

Wheeler confirmed the MECP received numerous complaints from the public following the incident.

A post on a local community page on Facebook discussing the blast has so far garnered 105 responses. Many local residents are using it as a platform to share their experiences in the aftermath of the explosion.

"It was pretty crazy how the house rumbled and the trees shook for a while afterwards," noted Joleen Thomas.

Andrea Coysh reported hearing the blast at her home just east of Minden, on County Road 21, approximately 20 kilometres away from the blast site. Emmy Lester, who lives in nearby Ingoldsby, said she too heard the explosion.

Susan Deborah works in Minden, and she said the blast "reverberated in the windows of our office building".

"Knew it was a blast, but unbelievable it was that far away," Deborah noted.

Living in the vicinity of the Thomas Contracting Quarry, Bert Kennedy is no stranger to the usual noises that emanate from the site. Last Wednesday's blast was anything but usual, Kennedy claimed.

"We live quite close to the pit where the blast took place and our house vibrated and shook," Kennedy wrote. "I was in my wood shop and thought a big tree was coming through the roof. Neighbours report things like structure damage, window and concrete cracks."

Some residents wondered if there was a connection between the 2 p.m. blast and an earlier sighting of a falling meteor, which came into view at around noon and could be seen across much of southern Ontario, but that was quickly chalked up as being a coincidence.

The MECP is currently working with both Fowler Construction and Austin Powder Ltd. to ensure the companies take appropriate action to address the public's concerns and ensure similar incidents do not occur at the site in the future. Wheeler noted the organizations will be required to meet with individuals who claim the blast damaged their property.

"We are requiring that the company conduct inspections of the reported damage to determine what steps are necessary to restore the property. The ministry will monitor the progress of these inspections and ensure that the parties involved take appropriate action," Wheeler stated.

John McBride, director of operations with Fowler Construction, informed the *Echo* that he has already met with representatives from Austin Powder Ltd. in an attempt to find what, exactly, occurred. While he acknowledged there was an exceedance on the acceptable noise level of the blast, as regulated by the ministry, the two companies were still working to determine its cause.

"We are collecting data from the subcontractor. We monitor for noise and vibrations on every blast, so we have to look at the seismograph readings and see where they are. We photograph and film it all too, so we can look at that frame by frame to determine, number one, what happened, and then number two, what can we do to make sure this never happens again," McBride said. "There are rules and regulations that we have to abide by and we take that very seriously. We do enough of this stuff that we have to fit within those guidelines."

McBride said interviews with the blasters on site had already been conducted, and the two companies were now working to understand what went wrong.

"We have to be able to explain this to the ministry, but we also have to be able to explain this to the public too. That's my concern right now," McBride said. "This sort of thing just cannot happen. We have to stay within the standards, period."

NOTICE
(Applicant -BERARDI/HOWARD)

IN THE MATTER OF THE *MUNICIPAL ACT* AND IN THE MATTER OF A PROPOSED BY-LAW OF THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF HIGHLANDS EAST TO CLOSE, STOP-UP AND CONVEY CERTAIN PORTIONS OF AN ORIGINAL SHORE ROAD ALLOWANCE ALONG THE SHORE OF **RUSTY SHOE LAKE**, MORE PARTICULARLY HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to the *Municipal Act*, S.O. 2001, and the Municipal Procedures, that the Township Council of The Corporation of the Municipality of Highlands East proposes to consider and if deemed advisable, to pass a a virtual meeting on **Tuesday, the 19th of January, 2021,** at 9:00 a.m., a By-Law to close, stop-up and convey to the adjacent land owners the following described lands:

Part of the Original Road Allowance in front of Lot 20, Concession 2, Township of Glamorgan, Municipality of Highlands East, County of Haliburton, made by **ELLIOTT AND PARR (Peterborough) Ltd.,** shown as Part 2 on Plan 19R-5124.

The Preliminary Plan of Survey is available to you for inspection by making an appointment at the Municipality of Highlands East offices, Wilberforce, Ontario.

The above described lands, by resolution, have been declared to be surplus. If you wish to attend the virtual meeting, please call or email the Municipal Clerk prior to the day of the public meeting so you can be provided with a link or phone number for the meeting. If you do not have the capability to attend a virtual meeting, please provide written comments to the Municipal Clerk prior to the public meeting.

Any person or his or her counsel, solicitor or agent who attends the virtual meeting shall be afforded an opportunity to make representations in respect of the within matter.

DATED at the Municipality of Highlands East, Wilberforce, Ontario this 15th day of December, 2020.

ROBYN ROGERS, MUNICIPAL CLERK
705-448-2981
rrogers@highlandseast.ca
Box 295, 2249 Loop Road
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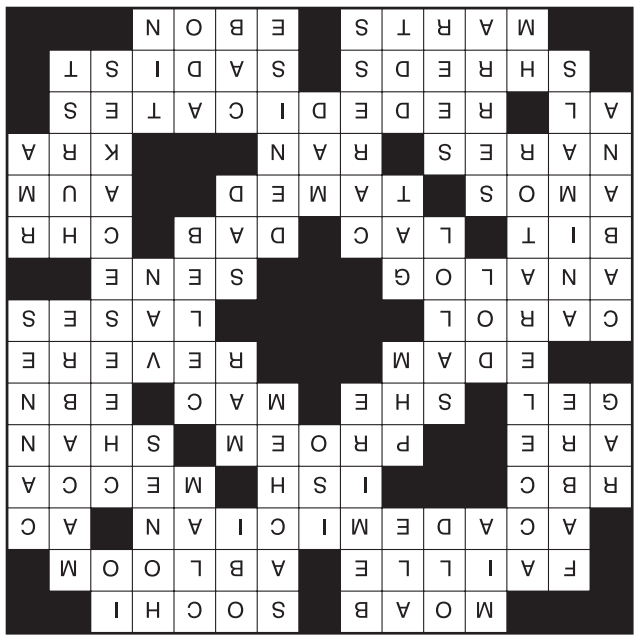

'Generous' Smith donated land for stewardship

from page 14

ceremony. "We talked about this and thought: What should we do? We've got to stop it. We've got to mobilize some naturalists and anyone who might have some influence on the NCC to stop this."

Smith had been coming to Haliburton since 1947. In 2011, four years after the death of his wife, Lorraine, he honoured her wish to protect, through the land trust, what is now known as Smith Forest, 72-acres of property bordering a wetland complex on the Burnt River.

"We were scientists, we were field naturalists, people like me like studying living things out in their natural habitats," said Smith in the land trust interview. "We started a survey of the plants that grew there, a survey of the birds that we heard singing, the mammals that we saw, the droppings, all that sort of thing, doing inventory of the property, because it was so interesting. It went on the one side, it was Little Black Lake. On the other side running through it was the Burnt River. There was wetland on part of the property. Most of it was forest. But we thought, why not give it to the land trust. We didn't want to see the whole of the county either lumbered, or filled with golf courses and cottages and motorboats and noise and all that sort of thing. But that some of the natural features of the county should be preserved. And Lorraine was one of the first people to offer this Black Lake property and have this little piece of forest in Haliburton preserved forever."

"They were, both of them, very generous, very supportive of the land trust," said Ziman. "He gave us both the property that was to be protected, and [a] cottage lot, and he said he wanted us to sell the cottage lot so that we could make enough money to support the stewardship and management of the protected property but also to further the goals of the land trust."

Smith was also generous as a contributing member of the community, taking part in cycling groups, square dancing and as a patron of local theatre, the farmers' market and local businesses. And always, regardless of whether he was sitting for lunch with the Diner's Club or in conversation with shop owners who he knew by name, he was generous with his time.

Ziman remembers at the end of naturalists meetings, there was a time set aside for when people would share their "nature notes" - what they had seen on their outings in the past month.

"Don was all ears at that part, and he would never go first, he would always let other people [have their say], that would be a chance to ask Don questions if we weren't sure about something and he would offer his opinion and observations, and then he would always go last, and you would sit back in your chair because you knew that it wasn't a two-minute thing like everyone else," said Ziman, laughing. "You had to be patient, but it was wonderful."

Smith is survived by five children, ten grandchildren and his younger sister and her family.

"Dad was kind, wise, funny, thoughtful, precise, and dedicated to the people and things he loved," reads his obituary. "In his final weeks, he was able to enjoy looking out at his bird feeders and forest property. He was taken to visit the beloved Haliburton cottage in his last months. Dad kept up with his family by phone, and was engaged and telling stories to the end."

The Haliburton Highlands Land Trust video, created by Tammy Rea and Midori Nagai, can be viewed at https://vimeo.com/channels/haliburtonhighlandsland or in the online version of this article at http://www.haliburtonecho.ca.

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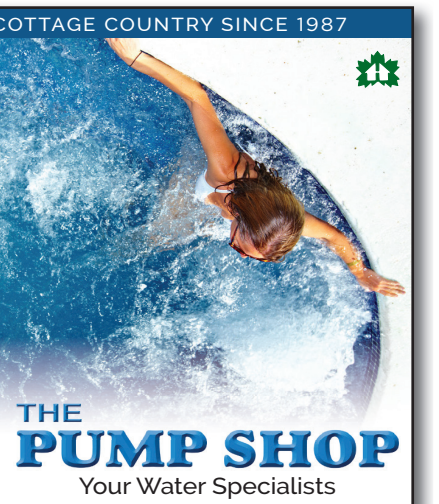

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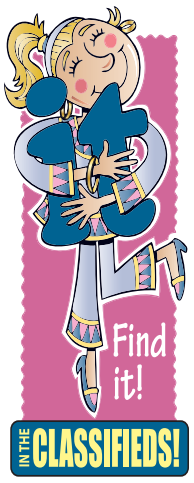

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Changing the world

Students come together to build hospital abroad

4

Wind symphony

Holiday melodies fill the Northern Lights Pavilion

20

Leaving a tip

Red Hawks Meghan LaPierre tips the ball beyond the stretch of a Fenelon Falls Secondary School player in their fourth game of the exhibition tournament at HHSS on Thursday, Dec. 2. See coverage of the game on page 27. Darren Lum Echo staff

First snowfall claims 15 vehicles

Darren Lum
Staff reporter

When it was all said and done there were 15 reports of motor vehicle collisions in Haliburton County after the first serious snowfall left behind 11 centimetres of snow on Wednesday, Dec. 1.

OPP officer Mark McMaster said road conditions on the day were "treacherous."

Last year when the county was hit by a similar blast of winter there were fewer OPP calls, he remembers, owing to the kind of snow, describing it as "slushy."

"That's the type of snow that is not very forgiving," he said. "When you get in that slush it just pulls you [off the road]."

Specific accident numbers were not readily available for comparison.

Despite the high rate of calls received by the police, Doug Ray, the Haliburton County roads department director, said, "It was a typical storm for us ... we get a number of these type of storms a year."

Although his crew did not work any more than normal, the department was in "continuous" motion, from 4 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., with its fleet of six tandem trucks, plowing, salting and sanding for the storm "that just came all at once."

They plow five routes, measuring at least 250 km of road, taking four hours to complete a route.

However the responsibility for some county roads are shared, such as Horseshoe Lake Road and Deep Bay Road covered by Minden Hills, Harburn Road by Dysart and three by Algonquin Highlands road crews. These shared

see BEST WAY page 3

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